



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8, MONTANA OFFICE
FEDERAL BUILDING, 10 West 15th St, Suite 3200
HELENA, MONTANA 59626

Ref: 8MO

August 12, 2008

Mr. Chas Cartwright, Superintendent
Glacier National Park
Attn: Avalanche Hazard Reduction FEIS
P.O. Box 128
West Glacier, Montana 59936

Re: CEQ 20080285; Avalanche Hazard Reduction
Project Final Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Superintendent:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region VIII Montana Office has reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Avalanche Hazard Reduction Project.

We appreciate receipt of responses to EPA's DEIS comments as well as responses to DEIS comments made by other agencies and the public. We are pleased that the FEIS continues to identify Alternative B, Construction and Modification of Snowsheds Without Use of Explosives, as Glacier National Park's preferred alternative. We support Glacier Park's preferred alternative since it appears to have the least adverse impact on the environment, and would provide the safest and most effective means of avalanche protection over the long term.

As stated in our earlier DEIS comments the EPA would be concerned about the use of explosives in the Park since they have potential to result in adverse impacts to wildlife due to noise and changes in natural avalanche processes that could affect vegetation and wildlife habitat and behavior (e.g., to elk, mountain goat, mule deer, wolverine, gray wolf, lynx, and grizzly bear). We believe use of explosives in winter when wildlife are already stressed due to cold, moisture and deep snow would exacerbate winter wildlife stresses, and in addition, explosive by-products and chemical residue from explosives may have potential to degrade water quality in snow avalanche pathways and downstream receiving streams.

The EPA appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on this project during the NEPA process. If you have any questions regarding our input please contact Mr. Steve Potts of my staff in Helena at (406) 457-5022 or in Missoula at 406-329-3313. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

/osb/

John F. Wardell
Director
Montana Office

Enclosures

cc: Larry Svoboda/Connie Collins, EPA, 8EPR-N, Denver